

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 25, 2000

John H. Thompson  
Associate Director for Decennial Census  
Bureau of the Census, Building 2, Room 3586  
Suitland and Silver Hill Roads  
Suitland, Maryland 20233

Re: Comment Letter Regarding Secretary of Commerce's Proposed Rule

Dear Mr. Thompson:

As Members of Congress representing millions of people across the country we have a large stake in making sure that Census 2000 is fair and accurate.

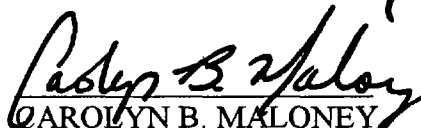
Since 1940 when it was first measured, the Census has systematically missed America's minorities and poor people at a far higher rate than the majority of the population. Such a bias in the Constitutionally-mandated enumeration is an intolerable condition that the Census Bureau has worked for decades to overcome. There is now a procedure called Dual Systems Estimation that uses a scientifically drawn sample of the population, which when compared with the Census, can produce more accurate and reliable population data. The Bureau, with the advice of the National Academy of Sciences and other statistical experts, is now implementing such a process.

Because of our concern that all of our constituents be counted regardless of race or economic status, we are writing in response to the "Request for Comments on the Proposed Rule" published in the Federal Register on June 14, 2000 by the Secretary of Commerce regarding the procedure for release of the corrected data file for Census 2000. The Secretary of Commerce has wisely determined that the best people to make such a decision are at the Census Bureau. The proposed rule delegates to the Director of the Census the authority to make the decision on the release of the most accurate data after receiving a report from a team of statistical experts from the Bureau. This team is made up of researchers and scientists who have spent years researching the use of statistical methods to increase the Census' accuracy.

The proposed procedure for delegation of the decision on the release of the Corrected Data for Census 2000 to the Director of the Census Bureau, upon the recommendation of his professional staff, removes the potential for political bias from what should be a scientific decision. The Commerce Secretary has set forth in his decision memo -- which accompanied this "Request for Comments on the Proposed Rule" -- the critical factors to be considered by the Census Bureau in determining whether the Corrected Data is the most accurate reflection of the U.S. population. If the statistical experts at the Bureau are satisfied that the criteria are met, then the decision to issue the Corrected Data can be

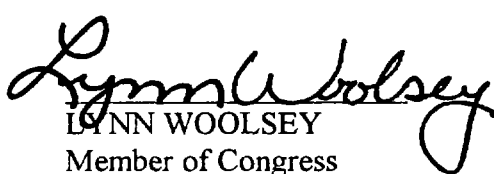
made as a matter of course. We fully support the Secretary of Commerce for his proposal to set forth a fair and unbiased procedure for making such a vital decision. We believe that if you were to ask most Americans, they would say that experts -- not politicians -- should decide. We support the proposed rule and urge its adoption.

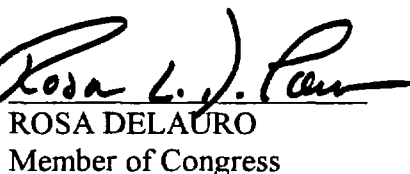
Sincerely,

  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY  
Member of Congress

  
ROBERT MENENDEZ  
Member of Congress

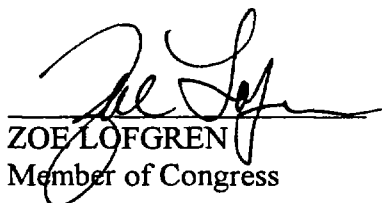
  
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Member of Congress

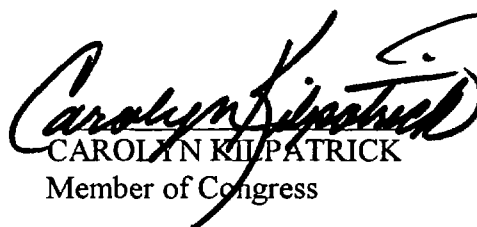
  
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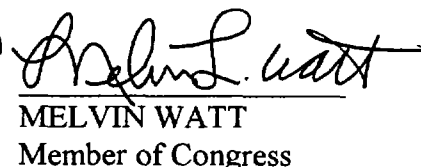
  
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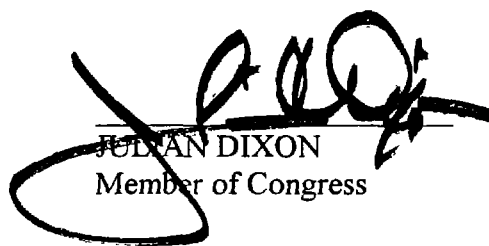
  
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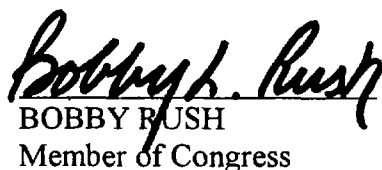
  
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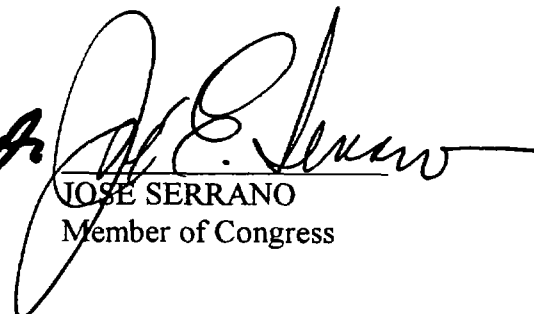
  
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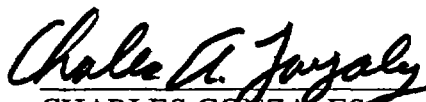
  
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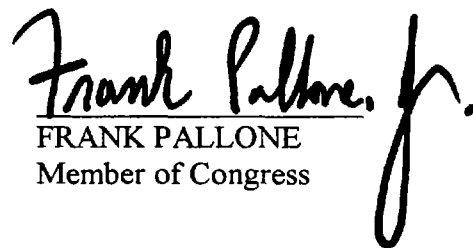
  
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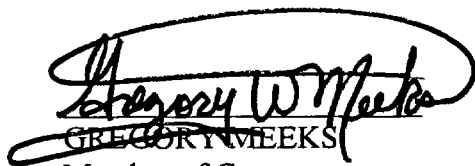
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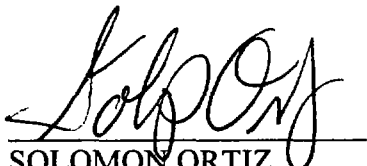
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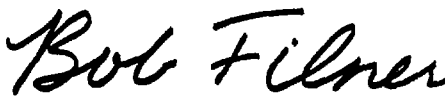
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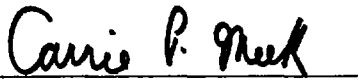
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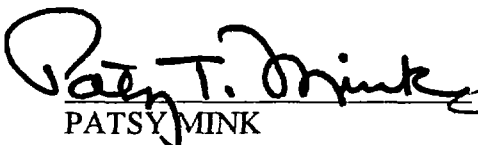
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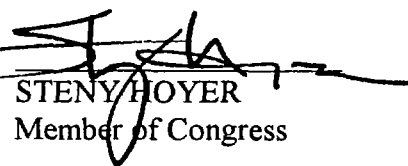
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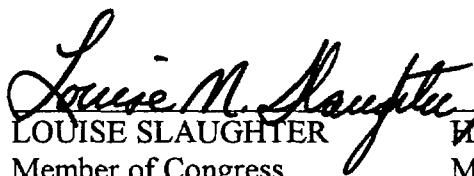
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LOUISE SLAUGHTER  
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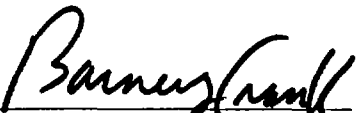
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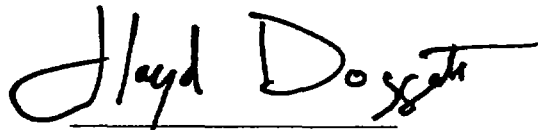
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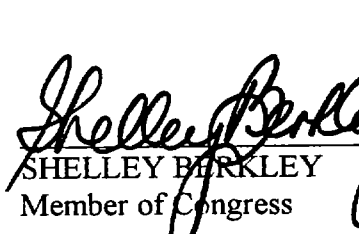
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